

VISIT...

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NO. 295 JAN. 30430 **35¢**

BATMAN

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

BACK OFF,
BATMAN--
OR THIS
MAGIC SHOW
BECOMES A
TRAGIC SHOW!



CHAPTER ONE:

"... A RIDDLE..."

ODDLY ENOUGH, IT BEGINS HERE: OUTSIDE THE GOTHAM CITY FEDERAL DEPOSITORY, AT 9:02 P.M. OF A COLD TUESDAY EVENING...

FEDERAL DEPOSITORY

WE GOT THE CASH-- WE'RE JUST ABOUT HOME FREE!

WITH THOSE ALARM CIRCUITS CUT, AIN'T NO WAY NO COPS GONNA CATCH US TONIGHT!

MAN, WE ARE WINNERS!



WRONG-- LOSERS!



YOU'VE GOT NOWHERE TO GO--

POW K-POW

YUHHHH



-- BUT DOWN!

9:13 P.M. -- AND, AT THE END OF ONE CASE, THE FIRST GLIMMERINGS OF ANOTHER...



COMMISSIONER GORDON, SHOWING UP AT A MINOR CRIME LIKE THIS? BECKONING ME...?

WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE, COMMISSIONER?

A MURDER--
PERHAPS THREE!

I JUST RECEIVED
A CALL FROM
OUR OLD FRIENDS,
THE MYSTERY
ANALYSTS!

THEY'VE GOT A
PUZZLER FOR
US TO SOLVE!

EYES SUDDENLY TURN
COLD OF ALL CRIMES,
THE MASKED
MANHUNTER
HATES MURDER
MOST INTENSELY.

CAN I GIVE
YOU A LIFT--?

MURDER MADE HIM
THE BATMAN... AND
IT'S A CRIME HE WILL
FOREVER AVENGE!

I MAKE MY OWN
TRANSPORTATION,
COMMISSIONER!

9:28 P.M.-- ON
THE FOURTH
FLOOR OF A
STANDARD MIDTOWN
BROWNSTONE,
FIVE MEN AND
A WOMAN
RENEW A
TRADITION
SOME
THOUGHT
FORGOTTEN...

TOO BAD HUGH RANKIN
COULDN'T BE HERE!

SEEMS ONE OF
US IS ALWAYS
OUT OF TOWN--OR
BUSY ON ANOTHER
CASE, MARTIN.

ART'S RIGHT!
PERHAPS THAT'S
WHY WE HAVEN'T
HAD A
MEETING IN
SO LONG...

...BECAUSE OF
ABSENT FRIENDS!

"ABSENT FRIENDS"
AND WHAT ABOUT
THE FRIENDS
WHO ARE HERE?
HAVE WE
REALLY
CHANGED
SO MUCH?

TRUE, DANTON
HERE ISN'T DISTRICT
ATTORNEY ANY MORE...

"THE MYSTERY
ANALYSTS OF
GOTHAM CITY"--
IT STILL HAS A
NICE RING TO IT!

"...BUT KAYE DAVE IS
STILL WRITING MYSTERY
NOVELS AND WINNING
AWARDS..."

"...MARTIN TELLMAN
CONTINUES TO SOLVE
CRIMES AS AN ARM-
CHAIR DETECTIVE..."

"...AND ART SADDOWS
STILL PRODUCES THE
BEST CRIME-INVES-
TIGATION COLUMN IN ANY
NEWSPAPER..."

BUT ALL THAT
DOESN'T
MATTER
NOW--

THE COMMISSIONER
SAID SOMETHING
ABOUT-A MURDER...

...OR THREE--?

RIGHT! I'LL START
WITH MY STORY, BATMAN!
CHRONOLOGICALLY, IT
WAS THE FIRST MURDER
--IF IT WAS MURDER!

"--AND EARLIER THIS
EVENING, AS I WAS
LEAVING MY STORE-
FRONT OFFICE--"

"--I WAS HORRIFIED
TO DISCOVER--"

--A DEAD
WOMAN--

--IN MY
DOORWAY!

HAMM
RESTAURANT
SORRY WE'RE
CLOSED

LEGAL AID OFFICE
ENTRANCE NO. 90-C

SINCE LEAVING
THE OFFICE OF
DISTRICT ATTORNEY,
I'VE WORKED AS A
LEGAL AID COUNSELOR
FOR THE POOR--

"NATURALLY, I CALLED THE POLICE,
WHO ARRIVED WITH AN AMBULANCE..."

"SHE WAS ABOUT TO BE PUT ABOARD
THE AMBULANCE WHEN--"



"SOMEHOW HE MANAGED TO BREAK
AWAY, FLEEING BEFORE THE POLICE
COULD CATCH HIM."



CONTINUED ON 5th PAGE FOLLOWING.

I'LL TAKE OVER FROM THERE, BATMAN. MY STORY'S SIMILAR... FRIGHTENINGLY SIMILAR!

"--BUT WHEN I PUNCHED THE CALL-BUTTON FOR AN ELEVATOR IN THE LOBBY--"

GOOD LORD!

THAT WOMAN'S... DEAD!

I WAS ON MY WAY TO MY NEWSPAPER'S EDITORIAL OFFICE TO DELIVER TOMORROW'S COLUMN--

"LIKE DANTON, I CALLED THE COPS, AND WHEN THEY ARRIVED, WE WENT THROUGH THE WHOLE ROUTINE-- BUT THEN, AS THE AMBULANCE CREW WAS CARRYING OFF THE BODY--"

GOTHAM CITY NEWS AGENCY

WHA--?! THE WHOLE BUILDING'S GONE DARK!

WHO TURNED OUT THE LIGHTS?

"THERE WERE A FEW SCREAMS FROM THE CROWD--"

"--AND SUDDENLY, JUST LIKE THAT, THE LIGHTS CAME ON AGAIN!"

"MAYBE IT WAS A MOMENTARY POWER SHORTAGE --AND MAYBE IT WAS THE MURDERER!"

"ANYWAY, HERE'S THE SCREWY PART--"

"--I, AND SCORES OF OTHER PEOPLE, WATCHED THAT AMBULANCE DRIVE OFF WITH THE BODY INSIDE--"

"--YET, WHEN THE AMBULANCE ARRIVED AT THE MORGUE-- YOU GUESSED IT--"

"THE BODY HAD VANISHED!"

"NOW I ASK, BATMAN--HOW'D IT HAPPEN? WHY?"

MAYBE I CAN ANSWER THAT, ART! I'VE BEEN LISTENING TO WHAT YOU AND JACK SAID--AND IT SEEMS WE'VE GOT A FEW COMMON DENOMINATORS HERE!

"--A PERFECTLY DREADFUL ADAPTATION THEY CALLED 'MURDER ON THE NEWARK EXPRESS!'"

A CORPSE-- HERE?!

"I WAS ANGRY AT WHAT I'D SEEN -- BUT MY ANGER TURNED TO SHOCK AS THE LIGHTS CAME UP, AND I SAW--"

IF THIS IS SOME PRESS-AGENT'S SICK IDEA OF A PUBLICITY STUNT--

I WAS AT A PREVIEW OF A FILM MADE FROM ONE OF MY BOOKS--

"BUT IT WAS ALL TOO REAL! THE POLICE AND AMBULANCE WERE SUMMONED, AND WHILE THE BODY WAS BEING LOADED--"



"--THERE WAS A DISTURBANCE! THIS TIME, AN ELDERLY WOMAN HAVING AN APPARENT HEART-ATTACK!"



"DO YOU GENTLEMEN SEE A PATTERN DEVELOPING--?"

I NOTICED THE PATTERN WHEN DANTON TOLD HIS STORY, KAYE!

OBVIOUSLY, DURING THESE DISTURBANCES, THE REAL BODY WAS SWITCHED FOR A FAKE OF SOME KIND!

THAT'S WHY THE STRETCHER WAS ALREADY ABOARD THE AMBULANCE WHEN THE DISTURBANCE WAS OVER... SO THE ATTENDANTS WOULDN'T NOTICE IT WAS TOO LIGHT TO HOLD A REAL BODY!

KAYE... GENTLEMEN... IT'S TIME WE ADJOURNED TO THE MORGUE!

YES, THAT'S OUR NEXT MOVE--

--TO FIND A CLUE--

--TO A MURDERER!



CHAPTER TWO: "...WRAPPED IN A MYSTERY..."

10:08 P.M. -- THE GOTHAM CITY MORGUE...

--MEAN TO STAND THERE AND TELL US YOU SAW NOTHING? A BODY IS SNATCHED RIGHT FROM UNDER YOUR NOSES-- AND YOU'RE ALL BLIND?

YOU TELL THEM, COMMISSIONER!

BELIEVE US, SIR, WE HAVEN'T HIDDEN ANYTHING! WHAT YOU SEE IS WHAT WE'VE GOT!

AND WHAT YOU HAVE IS A GREAT DEAL, MY FRIEND. COMMISSIONER, LOOK AT THIS--!

A WIRE SUB-STRUCTURE SO THIN IT'S ALMOST INVISIBLE...

...PROPPED UNDER THE SHEET TO MAKE IT APPEAR THERE WAS A BODY PRESENT!

IT COLLAPSED WHEN THE SHEET WAS REMOVED!

I'VE SEEN THAT SORT OF THING BEFORE-- BUT I CAN'T PLACE WHERE--

IN A MAGIC SHOW, KAYE-- SUCH AS THE SHOW CURRENTLY APPEARING AT THE MAGIC PALACE NIGHT CLUB!

NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME-- WE'VE GOT SOME UNINVITED COMPANY-- SOMEONE I'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO!

G.C.P.D. EXAMINATION WARD C
Auntie's room

THE WAY THIS FELLOW'S TAKING OFF--HE MUST HAVE SOMETHING TO HIDE!

WHOMP!

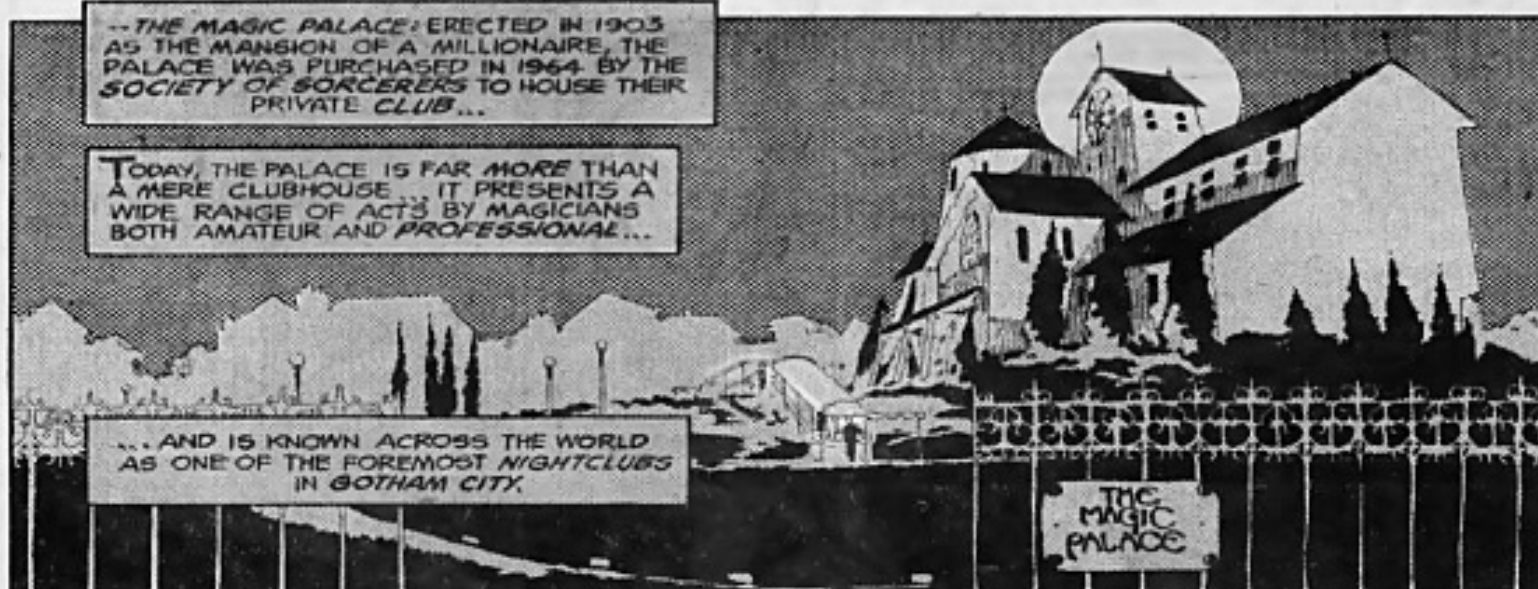


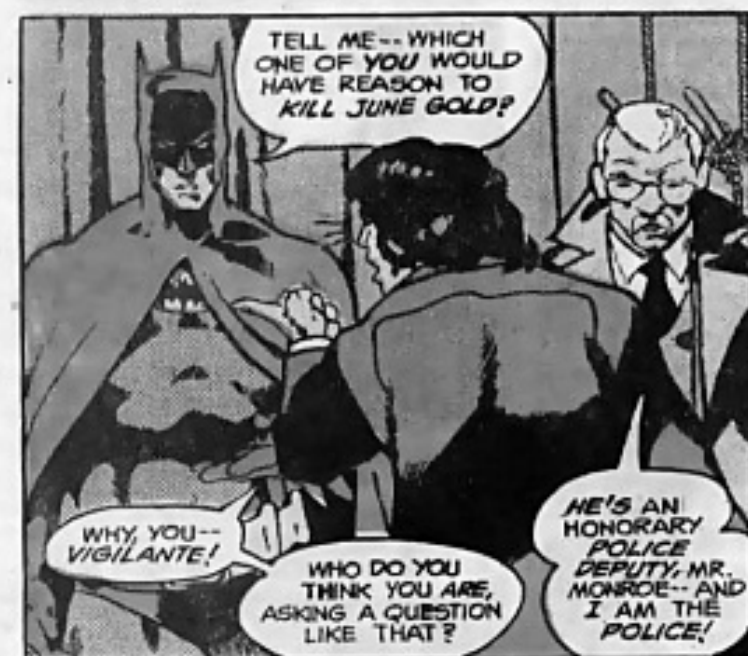


--THE MAGIC PALACE: ERECTED IN 1903 AS THE MANSION OF A MILLIONAIRE, THE PALACE WAS PURCHASED IN 1964 BY THE SOCIETY OF SORCERERS TO HOUSE THEIR PRIVATE CLUB...

TODAY, THE PALACE IS FAR MORE THAN A MERE CLUBHOUSE... IT PRESENTS A WIDE RANGE OF ACTS BY MAGICIANS BOTH AMATEUR AND PROFESSIONAL...

...AND IS KNOWN ACROSS THE WORLD AS ONE OF THE FOREMOST NIGHTCLUBS IN GOTHAM CITY.







CHAPTER THREE:

"... INSIDE AN ENIGMA..."

10:48 P.M.--FIRST HE FEELS THE COLD AND THEN, AS CONSCIOUSNESS SLOWLY RETURNS, HE FEELS THE WATER...

GOOD EVENING, BATMAN! FOR YEARS, I'VE BEEN AN ADMIRER OF YOURS-- THE WAY YOU ESCAPED ALL THOSE DEATHTRAPS, LIKE SOME MODERN-DAY HOUDINI--

REALLY, IT WAS QUITE INSPIRING!

PITY ISN'T IT, THAT YOU HAD TO INTERFERE WITH MY LITTLE MURDER! NOW YOU'LL HAVE TO TRY YOUR HAND AT A REAL DEATHTRAP...

... ONE YOU CANNOT POSSIBLY ESCAPE!

"PERHAPS YOU RECOGNIZE THE PARAPHERNALIA--ALL PART OF HOUDINI'S FAMOUS WATER-ESCAPE--ONE OF THE MOST INGENUOUS HE EVER DEvised!"

"UNFORTUNATELY FOR YOU, I'VE ALTERED THE EQUIPMENT SOMEWHAT!"

"NOW, UNLIKE HOUDINI, YOU HAVE NO MINUTARE PICKLOCK TO REMOVE YOUR HANDCUFFS -- AND THERE, AS SHAKESPEARE WOULD HAVE IT--"

--IS THE RUB!

YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY HAVE TIME TO ESCAPE THE CUFFS BEFORE YOU DROWN!

I'D LOVE TO STAY AND WATCH YOUR DEMISE, BUT UNFORTUNATELY, THERE'S NO TIME!

I HAVE A PERFORMANCE TO GIVE, YOU SEE-- "THE SHOW MUST GO ON!"

BUT DON'T WORRY, I'LL BE BACK LATER, TO DISPOSE OF MISS DAYE--

--AND I'LL SEE YOU THEN-- THOUGH YOU WON'T SEE ME!

DEAD MEN CAN'T SEE, YOU KNOW! HA HA HA

I DO HAVE A PICKLOCK--IN MY UTILITY BELT!

BUT I CAN'T REACH IT IN THIS POSITION!

IF I WERE HOUDINI, I'D BE A DEAD MAN--

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

--BUT ONLY BECAUSE
HOUDINI PRACTICED
HIS ESCAPE-ARTS FOR
ENTERTAINMENT--

--WHILE MY
TRAINING WAS
IN METHODS OF
SURVIVAL!

THAT MEANS
I'LL HAVE TO
FORGET
THE CUFFS--

--AND CONCENTRATE
ON THE B/G PROBLEM--

--THE
TANK
ITSELF!

IF I CAN
JUST--GET
ENOUGH
PUSH--

--MORE--

--MUCH MORE...

KIKKK-KK-KK

SPRAS
SHH

FIRST...
GULP IN SOME
AIR--

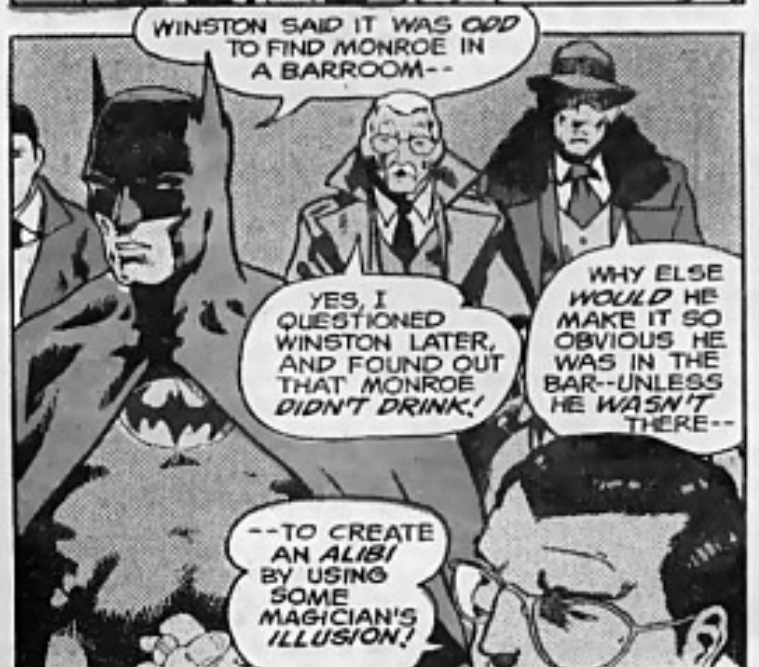








EPILOGUE: 11:30 P.M.--
A FEW LAST LOOSE STRINGS...



NEXT ISSUE ON SALE THE SECOND WEEK IN NOVEMBER!



#ocd on newnet
<http://ocd.conforums.com>